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Preface to the Selecta Principum Historicorum, published by
WYTTENBACH.

[Translation.]

It may perhaps be a subject of surprise with some persons, that I should publish a work like the present, which is intended for the instruction of youth, rather than for the use of the learned ; but when my motives are duly considered, the design cannot but be approved, and the wonder will then be, that I had not given it to the public before this time.

Twenty-two years ago, I began to give instruction in Greek literature, and ever since that time I have, to the utmost of my power, devoted myself to this part of education ; being deeply sensible of the importance of a study, the object of which is, to make us intimately acquainted with a people pre-eminent in genius, and by whom all liberal acquirements and subjects of human knowledge have been cultivated and transmitted to us ; for without such an acquaintance with this people, neither our studies of the works of Roman authors, nor in short any part of a course of *liberal education* can be advantageously pursued.

In Greek literature (as in the literature of other nations) we commonly make four divisions or parts ; which are, *History, Antiquities, the Enumeration and Review of authors, and Grammar*. The first three of these I have taught, either in connexion with the usual studies of my school, or separately ; but the fourth branch I am constantly engaged in ; because by that alone can we open the way to the other three, as well as to a thorough acquaintance with the language itself, and with the genius of the nation. In this course of study my annual duties are so arranged, that I begin with one of the best prose writers, then add Homer, and at the close finish either with a tragic or a comic author, or with pastoral or other poetry. And, as by the ordinances of our ancestors, it is the duty of professors of the Greek language to explain the Greek Testament, I make it my duty, from time to time, to go through a grammatical examination of some chapters of it, in order to explain the meaning of the writers, and to show in what respects their language differs from the Greek standard.

The remarks, which I have here made on these particular authors, may be applied to others ; for with the others, both

Greek and Latin, my plan is, not to go through their entire works and flood the mind of the pupil with all the learning connected with them, but to exercise him in the most important of their writings, and thus discipline him to such a familiarity with them, as will enable him to read any of their other works himself.

At first I was able to supply myself with books for the use of my pupils ; but at length, in consequence of their increase in numbers and their diversity of character, I found there was a want of prose authors, particularly in History, a branch of study which captivates readers of every taste ; and this scarcity was my reason for publishing the present volume.

In making a selection of this kind, I am not without apprehensions, that some persons may think it strange that I should ascribe so much importance to the *prose* writers ; for, generally, the teachers of Greek make but little use of them. On this point, however, my opinion has always been, that we ought to be conversant with prose as well as poetry in our youth ; for, as on the one hand, they who read the prose authors alone, cannot fully relish all the beauties which those writers borrow from the poets, and indeed are cold and insensible to the native and inherent charms of prose itself ; so, on the other hand, those persons, who give themselves up to the poets, are so habituated to measured language, that they can tolerate nothing but the chime of verse, and they would die of weariness under the most exquisite Attic beauties of a dialogue of Plato, or the inimitable graces of a comedy of Aristophanes ; and still more insensible would they be to the ingenuity and acuteness of the philosophers and orators. I have often remarked, also, that it is a much greater labour to revive our relish for prose than for poetry ; and, that a man who is a *prose student* (if I may use that expression) will become acquainted with the poets more easily than a mere *student of poetry* can attain to a thorough knowledge of the prose writers. But, unquestionably, both these kinds of authors ought to be studied with equal care. They, who study the poets only, resemble him, who, captivated with the enjoyments of the fountain, reposes himself by it without regarding the fertility of the surrounding fields and the luxuriance of the fruits which are the products of its expanding waters ; while they, who content themselves with the study of prose, are like him, who is satisfied with the fruits of the fertilizing

streams, but has no zeal to explore the fountain, which would enable him to give freshness to his domains and increase their products.

As neither kind of authors, then, is to be omitted, it will as usual be asked, with which we ought to begin. Some decide for Homer; but others prefer an easy prose writer. Both are partly in the right and partly in the wrong; they are in the right, if they mean, that we ought to begin a course of *education* with a prose writer, and a course of *reading* with Homer; but they are wrong, if they make no distinction between our beginning to learn a language, and *reading or studying the authors* who have written in it. Undoubtedly in reading those authors, and acquiring that knowledge of antiquity which is to be derived from the study of them, the best method is to follow the order of the different periods in which they wrote, proceeding from the most ancient to the later authors; and with this view we ought to begin with Homer, from whom, as the fountain, all the rest have flowed. But such a kind of reading as this can only be accomplished by an experienced scholar, who can bring to the task a competent knowledge of the language, which he must be supposed to have already acquired. As to the argument so much relied upon, that poetry is more ancient than prose, and that the ancients themselves used to make their children begin with Homer and the other poets, there is a great fallacy in it, which is overlooked by those who resort to it. That poetry is more ancient than prose, is true as to the *language of writing*, but not as to that of *speaking*; unless, indeed, there should be any persons who imagine, that Agamemnon, Achilles and the other heroes of Homer discoursed in the verses which the poet has put into their mouths. And as to the practice of the ancient grammarians or instructors, who used to begin with Homer, this might answer with the youth of Greece and Rome; for they learned the language of prose by daily intercourse with society.

But, perhaps, it may be asked, why I have in this Selection passed by the philosophers, orators, rhetoricians and all the other writers except the *historians*. My answer is, that I do not omit those writers in my course of study; but I was in immediate want of a selection from the historians. I had, indeed, originally intended to divide this work into four parts; the first to consist of selections from the historians;

the second, from the orators ; the third, from the philosophers and rhetoricians ; and the fourth, from the tragic and comic writers. And in the first part, some of my pupils, with a laudable zeal for learning, had given me their aid by transcribing, for the use of the printer, passages from works already published. But although this saved me much labour, yet the revising, correcting and enlarging of their work, and adding to it such annotations as the bookseller desired for the purpose of rendering it more acceptable to the purchaser, and, afterwards the digesting and arranging of the whole and the correcting of the proof sheets, took up so much of my time, that I resolved to content myself with what I have accomplished in this first part ; leaving to others, the care of publishing the remaining parts ; which, indeed, I have thought might possibly be done by some of my pupils ; and if this should ever be undertaken by any of them who may be qualified to do it, I shall take pleasure in assisting them, at least with my advice, if I should not be able to aid them with my personal services. So far am I therefore, from passing over the study of other writers in my course of instruction, that to the more advanced scholar I should by all means recommend them. For who can entertain a doubt, that in the writers of those classes are to be found abundant materials and occasions for moulding and giving the right direction to the minds of the young ? What, for example, can be more advantageous than the study of the orators, to store their minds with a sound knowledge of the principles of civil polity ? Or what more efficacious in training them to speaking in public with the greatest effect ? What can be more exquisite than the orations of Lysias ; what more finished than Isocrates ; or what more perfect in every thing than Demosthenes ? Among the philosophers, also, there are two who are worth all others, Xenophon and Plato ; than whose copiousness and suavity nothing can be imagined more efficacious in promoting the acquisition of the most valuable knowledge, or more completely adapted to attaining the art of discussing any subject ? To these I may add, in the third place, Lucian, whose writings abound with Attic grace and Socratic irony ; and what writer is entitled to precedence of him, in teaching us the faults to which men are liable, and the means of avoiding them ? Further, (not to omit the rhetoricians) as to forming a judgment of the beautiful, and the art of criticism

and the estimating of authors, as well as for the principles of unadulterated eloquence, what illustrious guides have we in Aristotle, Hermogenes, Theon, the incomparable Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and the truly divine Longinus?

The different effect produced by the works of these various authors I have often witnessed in my school. Some boys were extravagantly fond of the orators, and were cold and insensible to the excellencies of other writers; but others were wonderfully delighted with Socratic discussions, and discovered a total indifference to works of every other sort; and the same diversity of feeling manifested itself in respect to other classes of authors both in prose and poetry. Indeed, all boys are not alike qualified by their talents, or if by talents, they are not by age, to enjoy all the different kinds of writing; but they differ in their susceptibility, as well as in their advancement in learning; and those who are just initiated, cannot have the same enjoyments in literary pursuits as those who have made greater progress; besides which, they have by nature different tastes, so that one is affected by one kind of writing, and another by a different one. But this, though true in general, is not the case with *history*; for that pleases boys of every age and in every stage of their studies; it is intelligible to all, and all find charms in it.

History, however, admits of diversity in its matter; and it will accordingly be found that the present collection contains examples of the other kinds of writing. It has the gravity, the force, and the argumentative quality of orations; it has the gracefulness and the probability of dialogue; the methods of arguing, and discussing subjects, and the examination of topics connected with other parts of knowledge both of human and divine things; all which, indeed, may be summed up in the peculiar characteristics of history, which are, perspicuity and ease in relating events, and fidelity in exhibiting the actions of every description of men, either as a warning or as an example to others.

But, after all, I may perhaps be asked, even admitting that a collection of this kind was wanting, why I have thought only five of the Greek historians to be worthy of a place in it? *Worthy* indeed they all are; but I was obliged to omit the others, in consequence of the plan upon which I had formed my work; I might have made selections out of all

the historians, from Herodotus down to Procopius, or even to the latest of the Byzantine writers ; so that the reader would have been enabled to obtain a knowledge of the gradual decline of eloquence. This, unquestionably, would be a most useful kind of knowledge ; but it belongs rather to men than to boys ; for their fresh and undisciplined powers of mind cannot all at once be confined to such exactness of discrimination ; and, besides, they ought to derive their nutriment from the choicest sources ; while the less pure aliment of their faculties should be withheld from them, lest a tinge should be communicated that could never be removed. Still, however, it may be urged, that I might at least have selected some parts of Theopompus, Timæus and others of that age, or at all events from Dionysius of Halicarnassus. But in these writers, we do not find the most striking passages ; or if there are some such, they have not that pure and native colouring and character which are so conspicuous in Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon ; from whom, as classic and standard authors, I have made large extracts. I have taken some passages from Polybius also ; for he is ranked among the classic writers, and if in point of style, he is not entitled to that rank, he is eminently so for his matter, and his high authority as an historian. I have also taken some passages from Plutarch ; because all agree, that it is of singular advantage to boys to be early acquainted with the writings of that author, on account of their peculiar utility in imparting useful instruction ; they, however, have difficulties both in the style and matter, which render some assistance highly necessary to the pupil. But I will now examine these writers in their order.

The first of them is Herodotus, who is justly styled the *Father of History*, because he is the first who wrote general history, and the first who adorned it with the graces of eloquence. To him indeed, is applicable in its full force the praise which is given to Nestor in Homer—

Τῆς καὶ ἀπὸ γλώσσης μέλιτος γλυκίαν ῥέειν αὐδῆ

————— in persuasion skill'd

Words, sweet as honey, from his lips distill'd.*

So delightful and so engaging is he in his narrative, and such perfect simplicity is there in his manner, that we

* Pope's Translation, *Iliad* i, 331.

fancy we see before our eyes a venerable old man just returned from his travels through distant countries, and sitting down in his arm chair, relating without restraint all that he had seen and heard; not omitting even some wonderful things to which he gave no credit himself. His style seems to have been formed purely by his native good taste and by practice, rather than by the rules of art; for at that period the writing of prose was not very common. It was first cultivated in Ionia by the philosophers, but very slowly; then by the historians Hecataëus, Hellanicus, Charon of Lampsacus, and Xanthus of Lydia. But the lustre of these writers was overpowered by the superior brilliancy of Herodotus; just as Homer's divine genius overwhelmed the mediocrity of all the preceding poets. And indeed in many respects Herodotus himself is truly Homeric—Ὅμηρικώτατος—this is peculiarly observable in the plan and distribution of his work (which bears a resemblance to an epic poem) and in the use of the Ionic dialect both in words and idiom; but above all in that inimitable simplicity of ancient times, and that evenness of colouring, which are diffused through every part of his subject and his language. From this resemblance, therefore, it may well be doubted whether the study of Homer is the more useful for thoroughly understanding Herodotus, or that of Herodotus for understanding Homer; however that may be, it is certain, that the study of the two may be united with great advantage to the pupil.

Next to Herodotus is Thucydides; a writer also of the very first rank, but excelling in a different way. He has taken a less extensive subject; confining himself to the affairs of Greece alone, and chiefly to the events of the Peloponnesian war; and of that, he does not relate all that he saw or heard, but only those things which were worthy of being recorded, and which he ascertained to be true after examination of the evidence upon which they rested. He rarely makes a digression from his main subject, and never, unless it is indispensable to the understanding of the narrative. The same conciseness is observable in his language, both in single words (which are so many sentences) and in his entire periods; in which, indeed, ideas are condensed rather than unfolded and displayed, and are sometimes obscured rather than elucidated. But with all this compression of style and matter, what wonderful grandeur and sublimity of thought

does he possess ! What weight in his opinions ! How just an estimate does he always make of virtue and vice ! How skilfully does he investigate and display events and their causes, and the principles of military and civil polity ! With what sagacity does he unfold the human heart and explore its inmost recesses ! In fine, what a master of narrative is he, when he can seize the attention of his reader, carry him into the midst of the scenes described, and make him hear the din of arms and witness the havoc and slaughter, and partake of the agitation of the warriors who are engaged in the contest ! In truth, as respects the *art of writing*, his works come to us under very different circumstances from those of Herodotus ; for Thucydides not only had his master Antiphon to instruct him in composition, but Anaxagoras likewise to teach the art of thinking. In addition to the direct authority of Marcellinus on this point, we may believe this to have been the case with Thucydides, because it was with Pericles ; for the latter infused into his public orations all those treasures of knowledge, human and divine, which he had derived from Anaxagoras ; and, in my opinion, Thucydides seems to have closely copied Pericles, in order, as none of the writings of the latter are extant, that posterity might in this history be possessed of the very form of the eloquence of that great man. After the pupil is, by a previous acquaintance with the works of Herodotus and Xenophon, prepared to enter upon Thucydides and make himself master of his style, he may proceed with advantage to any other writers whether of prose or poetry.

The third author in this Selection, and of the same rank, is Xenophon ; who has tempered that severity of style which Thucydides adopted, and has made the sweetness, perspicuity and simplicity of Herodotus his model. Xenophon too had the advantage of instruction in his youth under the most celebrated masters of eloquence and philosophy ; in the former, Prodicus, and in the latter, Socrates ; whose elegant and popular mode of reasoning, so admirably adapted to all the purposes of life, he has preserved in particular treatises (of which I need not speak in this place) and has also infused into his larger historical works. Those larger works are three in number. His *Cyropædia*, or Institution of Cyrus the elder, which he did not write as authentic history, but as a medium for conveying to us the sound precepts of Socrates for the

education of a good king. His *Anabasis*, which is an authentic history, containing the expedition of Cyrus the younger ; of which expedition Xenophon, from being at first merely an attendant, was afterwards made the commander ; in which situation, applying his Socratic instruction to practical use, he delivered his companions from impending destruction ; and, conducting them through the midst of the enemy and through tracts of country almost impassable, brought them back in safety to their country. No work more abounds with examples both of speaking and acting, adapted to all the circumstances of a civil as well as a military life. And, as Xenophon, in the rest of his works, excels other writers in natural endowments, in the soundness of his precepts and the natural ease of his style, so in the *Anabasis* he appears to have surpassed himself. I have therefore made the largest extracts from this part of his works. The remaining work of his, which I have made use of, is the *Hellenica*, or the History of the Affairs of Greece from the termination of the history of Thucydides to the battle of Mantinea—an admirable work, truly Xenophontean, and the only work of that age upon the subject ; it is, however, in my opinion inferior to the other two, both in the plan and execution ; for, after the perusal of those works, who can so far repress his feelings, as not to expect something wholly unexampled, nay more than human, in this work, where all Greece is the scene of action, and that too, at a period abundant in great men and great events ? And who will not in this work, eagerly seek for, and expect to find, the most splendid narratives of those illustrious deeds which he has read of in his youth, either in Nepos or some other writer who has derived every thing from Xenophon, as the fountain. Most of these events, however, are slightly and sparingly touched ; such as the affairs of Alcibiades, Conon, Iphicrates, Timotheus, Epaminondas, Pelopidas, the battle of Leuctra and other events. As to the narrative itself, there is, in the other two works, copiousness and energy ; but this is in a degree meagre and feeble, except perhaps where he speaks of Agesilaus and the Spartans ; we also feel the want of such eulogies of Cyrus and other commanders, as we find in the *Anabasis*. For these reasons I have sometimes entertained the opinion, that in this work, Xenophon either had only collected materials for a history which he was to write at some future day in a more

elaborate manner, or that, without having any fondness for this work, he only contemplated making a continuation of Thucydides. I cannot accede to the opinion, that this difference in the works is to be accounted for on the ground, that the Spartans were favourites with him above all the other people of Greece. Be this as it may, he did not by this deter others from writing; for several of that age (or about that time) did the same; as, for example, Theopompus, who wrote with elegance upon the first part of that period, and Callisthenes, who wrote on the latter part of it, in a work which also had the title of *Hellenica*; both of which authors' works were comprised in the general histories of Greece, by Ephorus and Anaximenes.

But these authors, although they had merit, never attained to the perfection of Xenophon's style; which indeed in the *Hellenica*, and still more in his other works, has a healthy soundness, an ease, simplicity and grace, which give it the preference above all others for the introductory studies of boys; whose fresh and youthful minds will there imbibe nothing but the wholesome aliment of the purest of fountains.

These three authors, of whom I have now spoken, flourished so nearly together, that each one of them, if he attained to old age, might have lived to see his successor just commencing his career. For, from the birth of Herodotus (who comes within the LXXIVth Olympiad, or 484 years before the Christian era) to the death of Xenophon, there was a space of 124 years. In their age historical writing is thought to have possessed all the vigour, purity and elegance, which belong to that species of composition; but this praise is due rather to a few men of genius and of a particular school, than to the writers of that period in general. For, to take one instance, Philistus and Ctesias were both contemporaries of Xenophon, but they could never entitle themselves to an equal degree of celebrity. Again, from the age of Xenophon to that of Polybius, there was a period of about two hundred years; during which, it is wonderful to observe how many eminent historians there were, who, in extent of knowledge and variety of learning, were not inferior to this Triumvirate, though in purity of composition they kept degenerating from that standard; for most of them were disciplined in the schools of the Rhetoricians, and came before the public decked out with the showy subtilties and trappings of art, but destitute of the

strength and healthy soundness of nature ; and, as commonly happens, they had more imitators of their defects than of their excellencies. Still, however, in the Macedonic age, under Alexander and his successors, if the *manner* of writing history was changed for the worse, yet in respect to *matter*, it was diligently cultivated and extended. For it was no longer confined to its old limits of the exploits of nations and their sovereigns, but was enlarged so as to comprise the origin and progress of the arts and sciences, and was thus made to embrace the lives of individuals, who had acquired eminence in those pursuits. This opened a new and extensive region, and brought into view people and countries which were before unknown. In addition to this, the grammarians, or critics, laboured upon and explained the auxiliary arts which are the instruments of promoting our knowledge of History, and in short of all other knowledge ;—I mean Geography, Chronology and Antiquities ; and above all, Criticism, which not only opens to our view the various monuments of antiquity, but teaches us how to determine what degree of faith is due to them and the weight of their authority. At this time arose an innumerable multitude of writers in every branch of learning, and among them consequently historians of eminence. Of these, (to name only a few of the principal ones) some came forth from the sound, and as yet incorrupt discipline of the schools of rhetoric ; such were Ephorus, Theopompus and Timæus ; others were from the schools of philosophy, of whom were, Aristotle (the first of them all in genius and learning) and almost every one of that band of Peripatetics, which followed him, as Theophrastus, Callisthenes, Dicæarchus, Aristoxenus, Phantias and Agatharchides ; others, again, belonged to the school of the grammarians, as Callimachus, Eratosthenes, Apollodorus ; while still another class came from the hardships of warfare and the camp ; such were, Alexander's companions, Ptolemæus, Aristobulus and Hecataeus, whose historical writings, like those of all the others, have been destroyed by time.

The *fourth* author in my Selection is Polybius, who flourished two hundred years after the Triumvirate I have mentioned, and may truly be called the *last of the Greeks* ; for he was born and brought up in a free country, and took a part in defending and governing it ; and, besides, when he had survived the liberties of his country, he yet preserved the true

spirit of civil liberty ; that spirit, which of itself alone, when accompanied with a knowledge of facts, will enable its possessor to discharge the duties of an historian, even though unskilled in composition ; while without such a spirit, eloquence itself is but an empty name. The mind of Polybius was of this class. He too was instructed in philosophy ; but not in the philosophy of Socrates, which was the handmaid of eloquence, nor in that of the Academy, nor of the Peripatetics, but in that of the Stoics, so barren of whatever conduces to an ornamented diction. Nor had he been disciplined in the schools of the Rhetoricians, nor did he from inclination train himself to an imitation of the ancient historians, or govern himself by the precepts of the grammarians ; but being introduced, while a youth, to the management of public concerns, and being constantly engaged in civil and military affairs, he chooses his words from the language of common life ; his style, therefore, though always perspicuous, is deficient in elegance. To this should also be added, a degree of scholastic loquacity and repetition of the same topics in his eulogies, as well as in calling the attention of his readers to a consideration of the causes of what he relates. Notwithstanding all this, however, he was diligently studied by those who came after him, and even his phraseology was often used ; from which fact we may infer, how highly esteemed he was for his knowledge, which was so pre-eminent that it not only compensated for the plainness of his style, but even led others to imitate him. And, in truth, with the exception of style, there is no historical excellence that is not to be found in Polybius ; the most determined zeal to investigate and publish the truth ; a discriminating judgment (which was improved by experience in the world as well as by study) in separating what was true from what was false ; the greatest sagacity in unfolding the progress of events, and tracing them to their causes, whether those causes were to be sought for in the particular character of individuals, or in the form of government of any state, or in the general relations of the different states of the known world, or in their military discipline, or in the climate, situation and products of different regions, or in the different characters of men, as they are influenced by different situations, numbers, powers of mind and physical strength. On all these subjects he is to be read not merely as a careful relater of events, but as an authority of the first rank. Ac-

cordingly, whatever characters, places or events are mentioned by him, he seems to have as thorough a knowledge of them as if they had come within his personal observation ; and with human nature in general he seems to have had so intimate an acquaintance, that nothing which belongs to man has escaped him. He thus accomplished what he had proposed to himself ; —to make History the directress of life, the herald of truth and the safest interpreter of futurity. Who can doubt, therefore, that young persons ought to have some little acquaintance with so eminent an historian, both for the purpose of knowing his merits and to prevent their condemning other authors as worthless merely from their plainness of style.

From Polybius to Plutarch there was likewise a space of about two hundred years ; and that age no less than the preceding was fertile in Historians of the same class. In that period, Roman literature also sprang up, and within the same space arrived at maturity and began to decline. But my present object is the literature of the Greeks. Among them, many men, distinguished by their erudition and acquirements in grammar and philosophy, became historians, and were more studious of communicating the knowledge of events, than of polishing their style ; but yet were not quite so negligent as Polybius in this respect. It was the taste of this age, and of the subsequent periods, down to the extinction of literature and philosophy under the Emperor Justinian, to bestow all their labour upon augmenting the stores of knowledge rather than upon the preservation of purity in composition. Among the historians of this period (from Polybius to Plutarch) whose works are lost, every body will recollect the names of Alexander Polyhistor, Nicolaus Damascenus, Juba, Athenodorus and Apion, who are frequently praised by the writers that succeeded them. Of those whose works are fortunately preserved, we must place in the first class, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo and Plutarch ; all eminent for their knowledge, and each possessing his peculiar excellencies of style ; and one of them, indeed, I mean Dionysius, rather entitled to a rank even among the ancients than merely among the writers of his time.

The last author, therefore, whom I have taken into view in making this Selection, is Plutarch. He was born in Greece, in the first century, and flourished about the middle of it, under Trajan, when the State had recovered a little from the

gloom of the preceding period. But in whatever state and under whatever reign he was born, nature had endowed him with such decision of character, that his mind elevated itself to the lofty height of the ancient Greeks. The genuine Grecian spirit, therefore, breathes forth in his works ; where we find those excellencies which are the characteristics of the *ancient* writers ; sound judgment, a proper sense of what is right and decorous in our deportment in life, liberality of feeling, affection for our fellow-citizens, benevolence towards all men, and unwearied zeal in deserving well of men, by enlightening their minds, forming their habits, commending their virtues, correcting their vices, and exterminating error of every form. His mind was richly stored with knowledge ; with the philosophy of the Platonic school,—(whose disciple he professed to be) as well as of the others, from all of which he imbibed what was most valuable ;—and with literature of every kind and a knowledge of the arts ; all of which he had acquired by unremitting study. When, therefore, he treats of the two different topics of Philosophy and History, (for his *Lives* are properly ranked in the class of history) it is difficult to decide, whether he has done more in confirming History by Philosophy, or in illustrating Philosophy by History, or in enlivening both of them by general Literature. This, however, I may with truth affirm, that all that excellence which results from this triple union—an excellence, of which we can form a higher idea in imagination, than we have ever found in reality—that excellence, I say, is found in a greater degree in Plutarch, than in any one ancient writer ; and in him it would have fallen nothing short of perfection itself, if to his consummate knowledge of things, he had united a corresponding perspicuity and elegance of style. But that want of perspicuity, and that obscurity, which result from the very nature of facts, that are not independent, but have relation to certain others, are not so much the fault of the author as of his reader ; it is therefore necessary, that the proper method of studying Plutarch should be early explained to young persons ; and then their capacity for understanding him, being strengthened by use and practice, will find enough of perspicuity and elegance to satisfy them ; for these qualities are in truth, not so much wanting in themselves, as they are concealed from the view of persons not conversant with his works, by the depth and weight of the matter. Let me not

be understood here, as recommending that youth should be at once put upon the study of Plutarch; on the contrary, I should reserve him as well as Thucydides and Polybius for the more advanced scholar, and should make a beginning with Herodotus and Xenophon. But I shall at this time make no further remarks on *Plutarch*, in illustrating whose works I have spent a great part of my life; it being my intention to reserve all I have to say respecting him for the edition of his works which I have undertaken, and which the Oxford press is now occupied in printing.

[In our next Number, we shall give the remainder of this Article, which contains an account of the critical labour that Wyttenbach has bestowed upon the correction of the text of his authors, and, (what will be particularly interesting and valuable) a minute narrative of the manner in which he himself studied the classics, and the method he recommends as the most useful to others.]



On the *Happy Temperament*.

THAT uninterrupted cheerfulness which laughs away the evils of life, and meets all its accidents with the same careless good humour, has been the praise of many, and the envy of still more amongst mankind. This was the character which Goldsmith most delighted to draw, and which appears often delineated in his pages, and always with peculiar happiness, and for which, amidst his frequent embarrassments and vexations, he seems to have sighed with a hopeless solicitude—for it was very remote from his own. So much has this easiness of disposition attracted the admiration of the world, that it has been denominated, by way of eminence, the *happy temperament*. Yet, admired and praised as it has been, perhaps, if we look narrowly into the subject, we shall find it far from entering into the character of the truly wise and good man, the man of feeling and reflection, the philosopher, the benefactor of his species. To be moved to sorrow by the sufferings of others, and to grieve for calamities of our own, are laws of our nature, ordained for sacred and beneficent purposes, and are the moving principles of all that we do for our own happiness, and all the good that we impart to others. The heart that is dead to these natural and healthy impulses,